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THE MESSAGE

—(OF)—

CHRISTMAS:

A Christmas Cantata in Two Acts.

FOR SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Libretto by Fanny E. Newberry.

Music by T. Martin Towne.

OLIVER DITSON & CO.

BOSTON. NEW YORK. PHILADELPHIA.

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THE MESSAGE

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CHRISTMAS.

—A—

CHRISTMAS CANTATA IN TWO ACTS,

FOR SABBATH SCHOOLS.

LIBRETTO BY

FANNY E. NEWBERRY.

MUSIC BY

T. MARTIN TOWNE.

BOSTON:

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No. 5 in **M. 393.13

MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS.

STAGE SETTING.

There are two scenes in each act, making four in all, the setting of which is changed but once. Let the stage first be prepared for a farm-kitchen (without the movable furniture), with a fire-place in the rear, which can be simulated by means of a draped shelf, with ornaments, and a fire-screen, set forward a little, from behind which a flickering light streams out. A candle or two will give the proper light. When all is ready, except the light, the whole can be covered with sheets, which should be hung all about the stage to form the ice-grotto. If these sheets can be spangled with crystal beads, or dipped in alum-water, to give them a crystalized appearance, the effect will be beautiful. These sheets can then be quickly removed for the second scene, after which there is no further change.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

MALE.	*FEMALE.*
SANTA CLAUS.....Tenor.	WINTER.....Soprano.
STORM-HERALD.....Bass.	SALLY SLOVEN.....
JACK FROST.....	ALICE GRAY.....
BOB BLUSTER.....	BLANCHE.....
WILLIE.....	LOUISE and KATE.....

Chorus of boys and girls.

COSTUMES.

REMARKS: Santa Claus, Storm Herald, and Winter, should be adults, or well-grown, with good voices, and they can support the Chorus behind the scenes throughout. Jack Frost may be personated by a boy or girl.

SANTA CLAUS: Like pictures—in furs, with conical fur hat—full white beard. In opening scene he should wear, in addition, a large ermine mantle, and carry a gilt sceptre. (Ermine is nicely represented by cotton-flannel, made up with the fleecy side out, and tufted with black yarn.)

STORM-HERALD: Black tights, or close-fitting garb, black skull-cap, and full black beard. A mantle of same color, tufted with white cotton-batting (to represent snow) with a border of rainbow-colors. It should be faced (and turned back) with silver paper, as "every cloud has a silver-lining." A heavy-looking mace of black, striped with silver, in his hand.

WINTER: A long, loose dress of heavy white material, hanging in statuesque folds—the throat and flowing sleeves trimmed with swan's down, or imitation-ermine. Corsage thickly sewn with clear crystal beads. Hair powdered with (so-called) "diamond-dust," and a diadem of crystal beads. In every available spot icicles should be sewn on. (These are easily made by dipping coarse threads in alum-water again and again, till thoroughly crystalized.)

JACK FROST: White slippers and long white stockings — or tights. Short skirt, bodice, and dainty cap of grass-green, thickly covered with crystal beads, to represent the rime of frost on vegetation. He should carry a crystalized cedar branch.

BOB BLUSTER: Very smartly dressed — with watch and chain.

SALLY SLOVEN: Old clothes, ragged shoes, and hair unkempt and flying.

ALICE GRAY: White dress. Flowing, crimped hair.

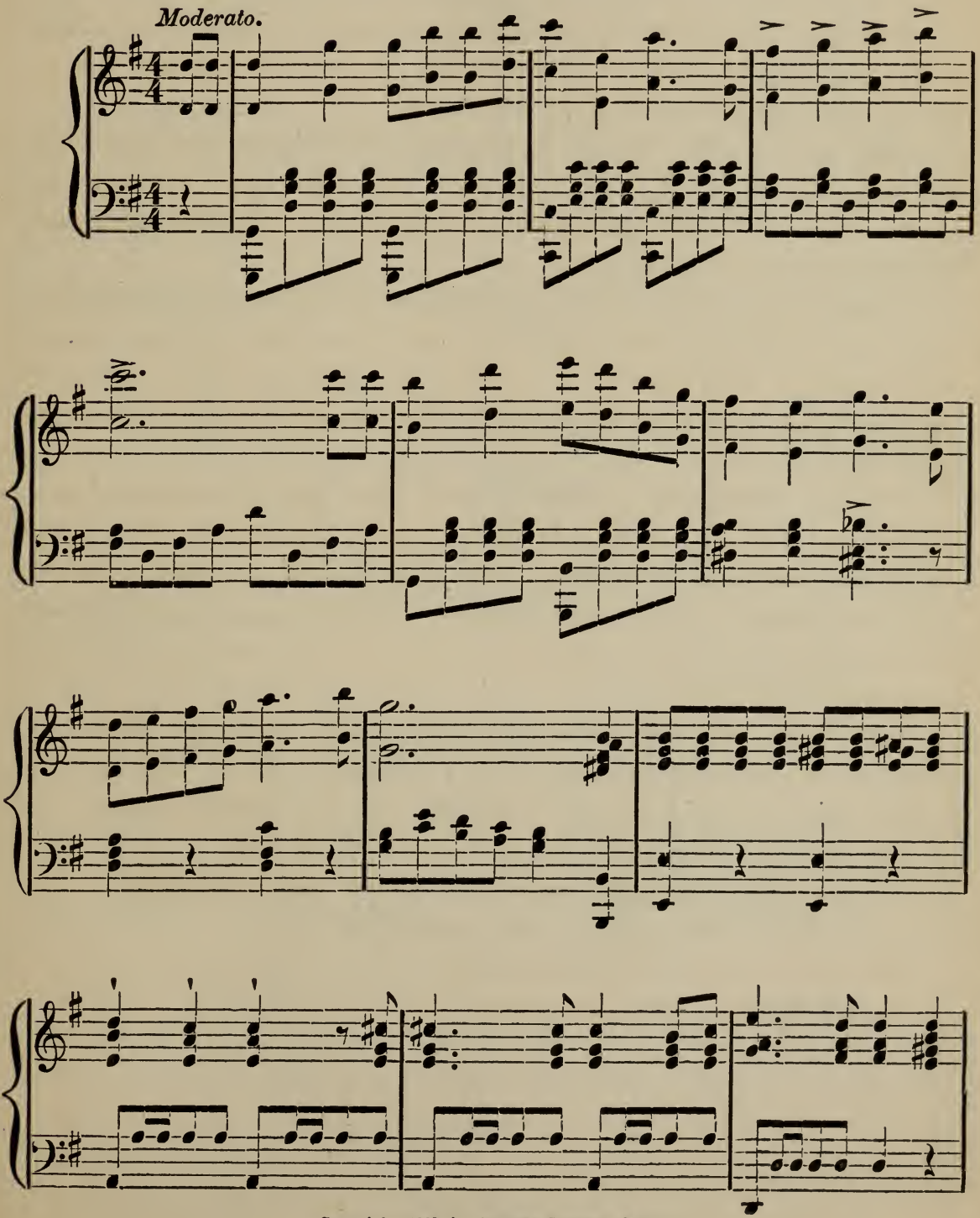
BLANCHE & LOUISE: Pretty girl-costume.

KATE & WILLIE: In old, poor clothes.

THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS.

Words by FANNY E. NEWBERRY. MUSIC by T. MARTIN TOWNE.

INTRODUCTION.



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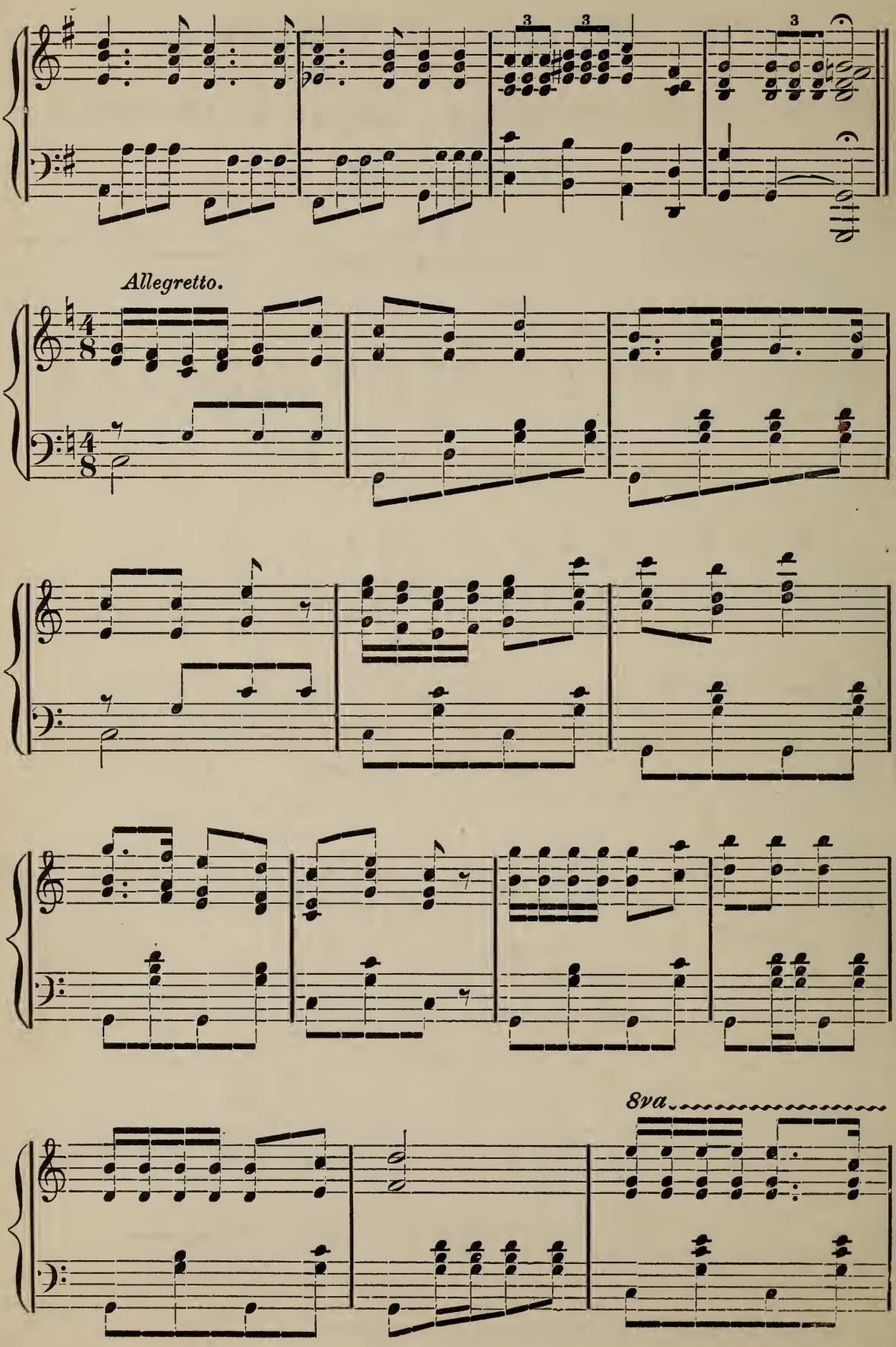
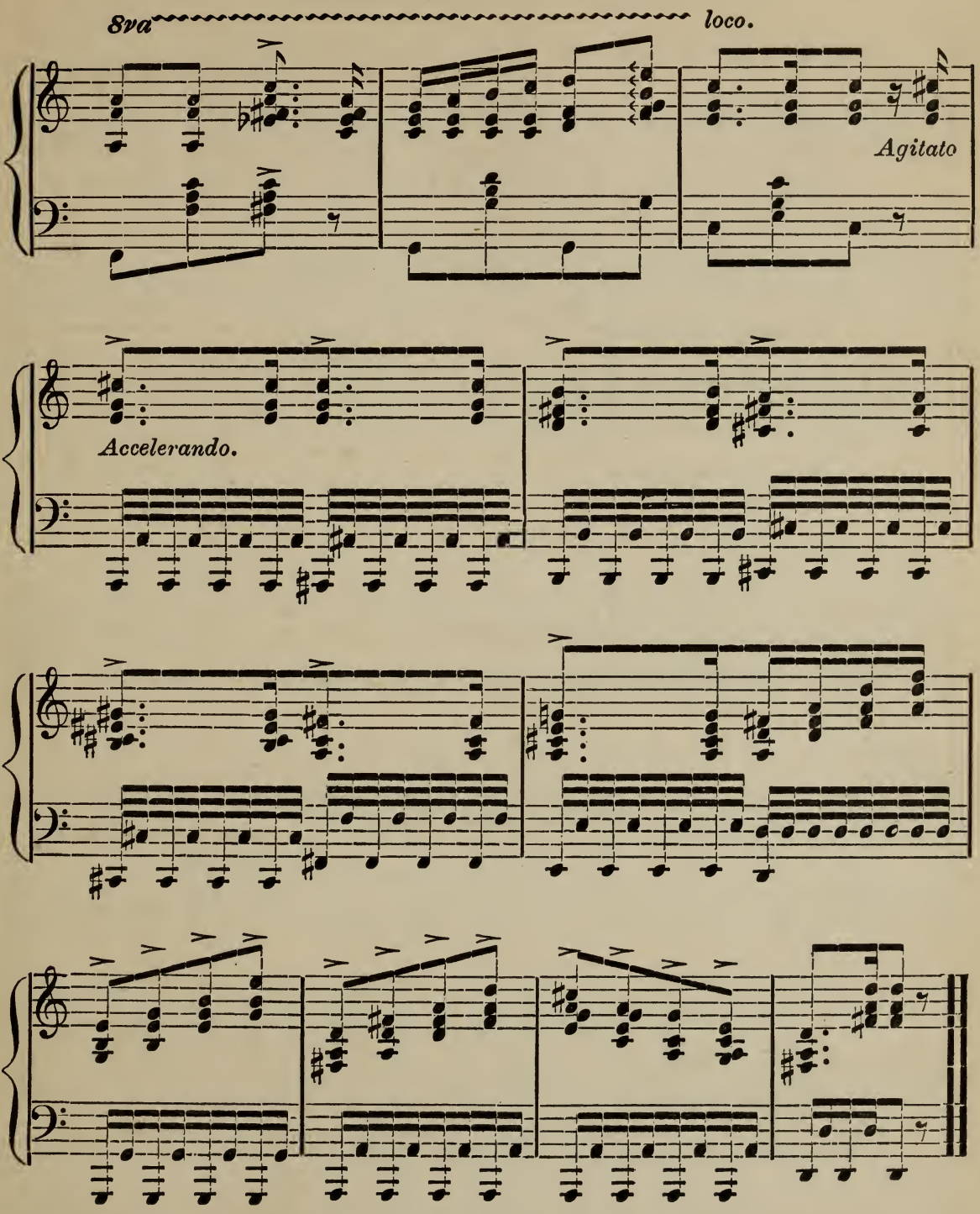

Allegretto.
8va



ACT I.

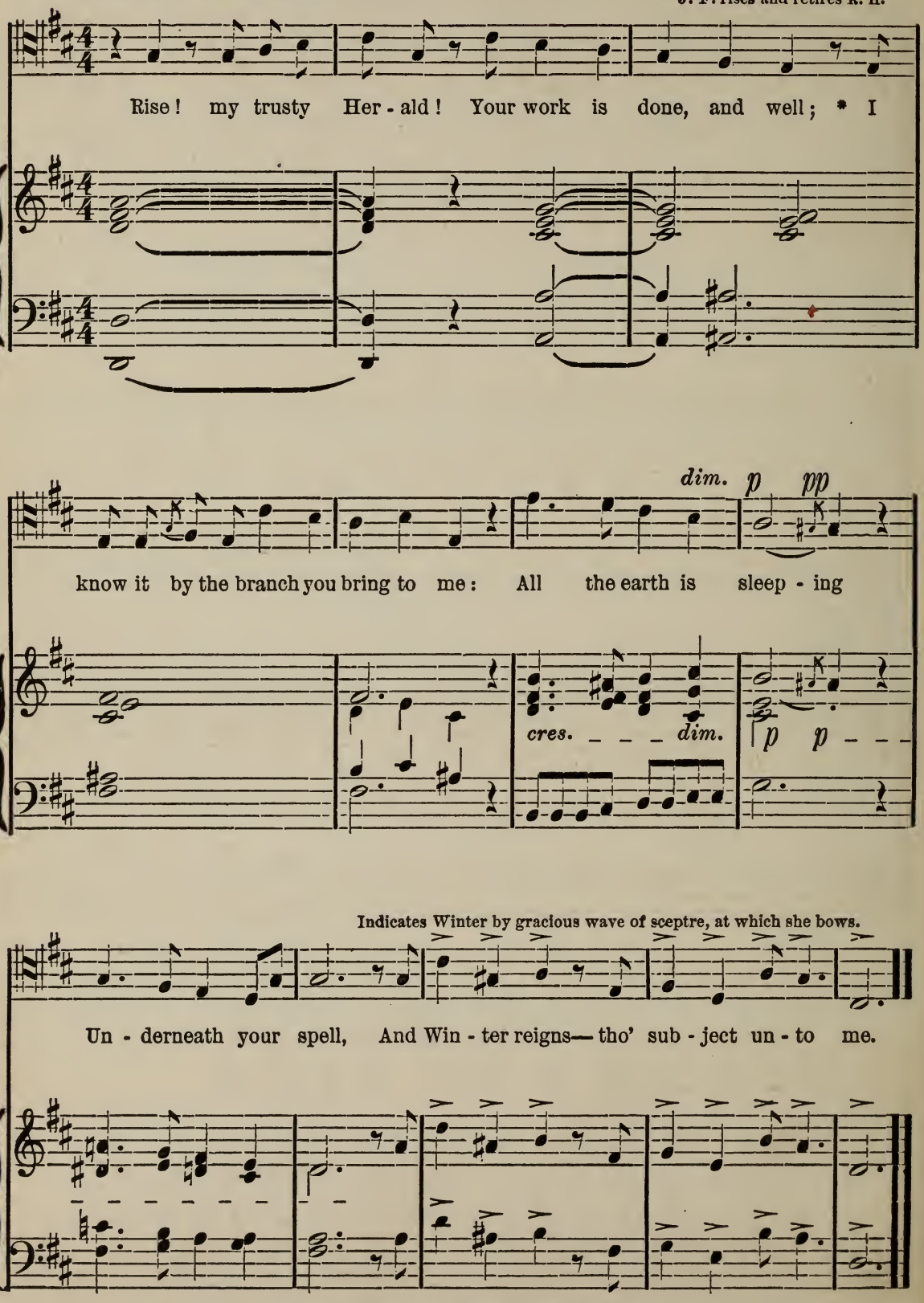
SCENE 1.— (*An ice-grotto. A large arm-chair covered with white fur robe, in the centre. Curtain rises and discloses* SANTA CLAUS *seated on this throne, with* WINTER *standing at his right hand, and the* STORM-HERALD *at his left.*

Enter JACK FROST, *who advances, holding a crystalized cedar-branch in his right hand. Bends on one knee before the throne, and extends the cedar-branch.* SANTA CLAUS (*extending sceptre graciously, sings.*)

RISE! MY TRUSTY HERALD.

Recitative. Santa Claus. (TENOR.)

* J. F. rises and retires R. H.


Rise! my trusty Her - ald! Your work is done, and well; * I
dim. p pp
know it by the branch you bring to me: All the earth is sleep - ing
cres. dim.
p p
Indicates Winter by gracious wave of sceptre, at which she bows.
Un - derneath your spell, And Win - ter reigns— tho' sub - ject un - to me.

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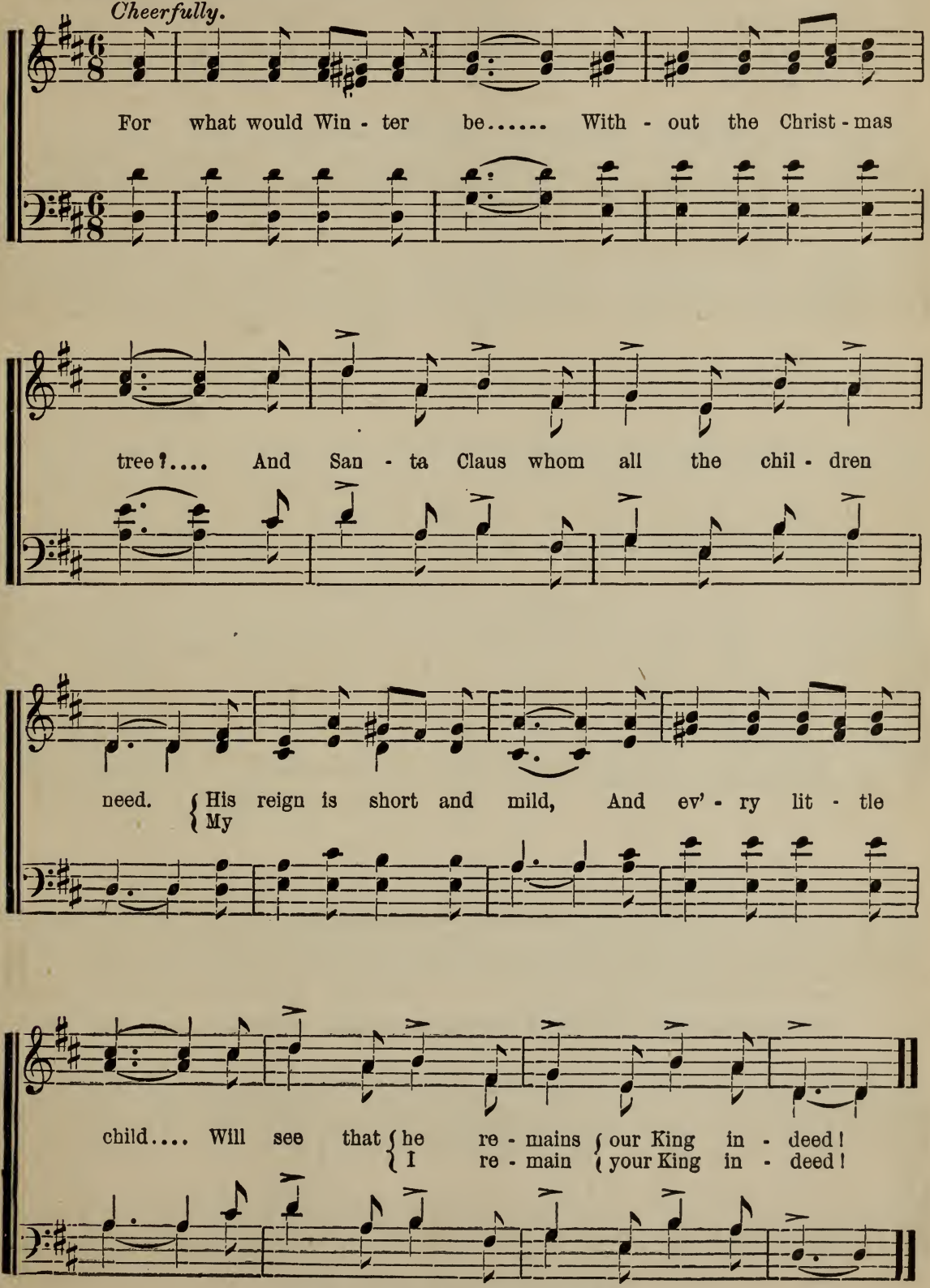
FOR WHAT WOULD WINTER BE?

(*All sing, saluting* SANTA CLAUS.)

Cheerfully.


For what would Win - ter be..... With - out the Christ - mas
tree?.... And San - ta Claus whom all the chil - dren
need. His reign is short and mild, And ev' - ry lit - tle
My
child.... Will see that he re - mains our King in - deed!
I re - main your King in - deed!

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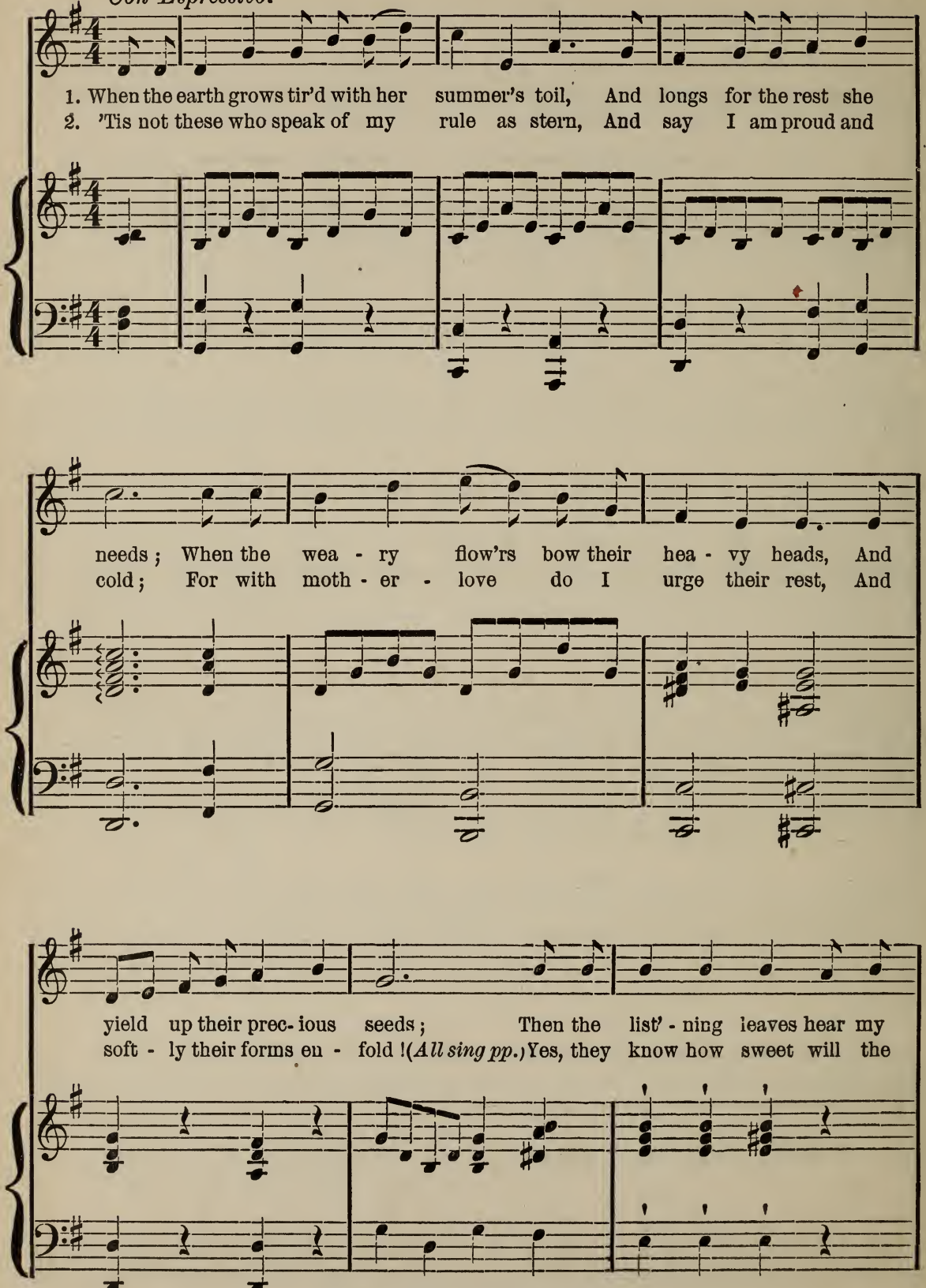
WHEN THE EARTH GROWS TIRED.

Winter. (SOPRANO.)

Con Espressivo.


1. When the earth grows tir'd with her summer's toil, And longs for the rest she needs; When the wea - ry flow'rs bow their hea - vy heads, And yield up their prec- ious seeds; Then the list' - ning leaves hear my
2. 'Tis not these who speak of my rule as stern, And say I am proud and cold; For with moth - er - love do I urge their rest, And soft - ly their forms en - fold! (*All sing pp.*) Yes, they know how sweet will the

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rit. ad lib.

her - ald's call, And blush in a love - ly way, Ere they
wake - ning be, The beau - ty your sleep will bring, So they

yield themselves to his dream - y spell, And si - lent - ly float a - way.
glad - ly yield to your i - cy chains, And wait for the kiss of Spring.

pp REFRAIN. (*For 1st verse only.*)

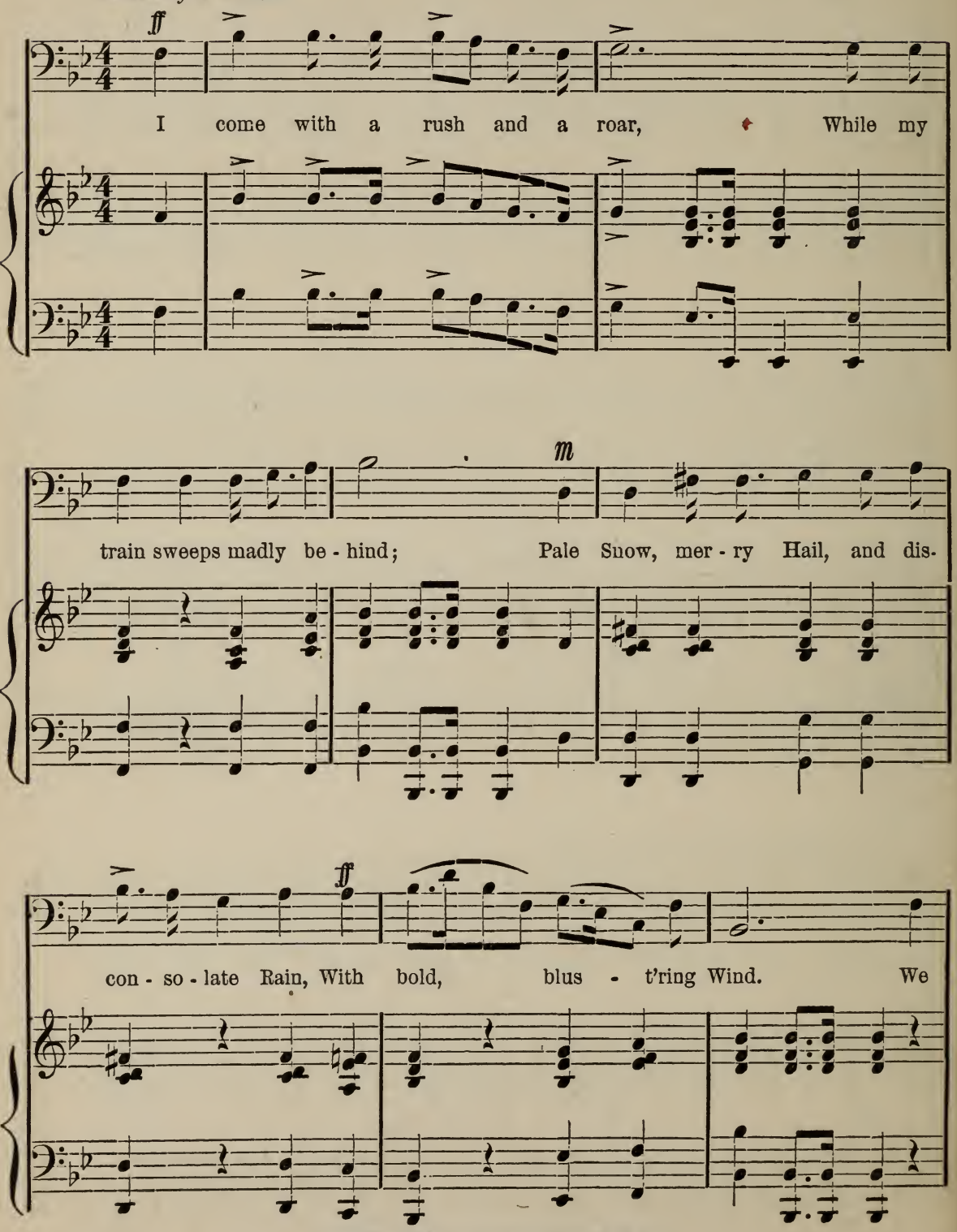
Float a - way,.... float a - way, float..... a - way.

pp

I COME WITH A RUSH AND A ROAR.

STORM HERALD *advances and sings.*

In time of a March.


ff
I come with a rush and a roar, While my
train sweeps madly be - hind; Pale Snow, mer - ry Hail, and dis-
m
ff
con - so - late Rain, With bold, blus - t'ring Wind. We

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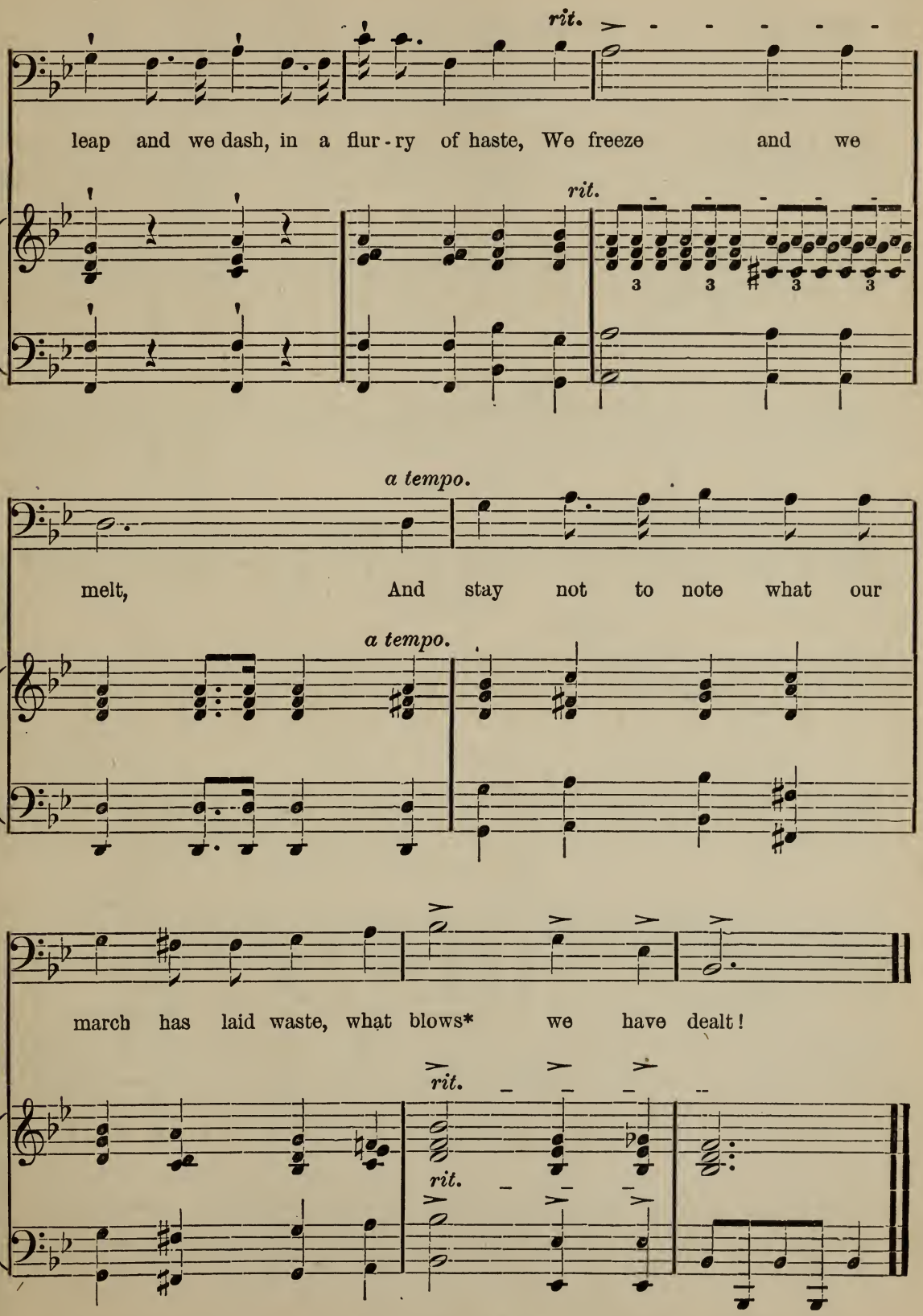
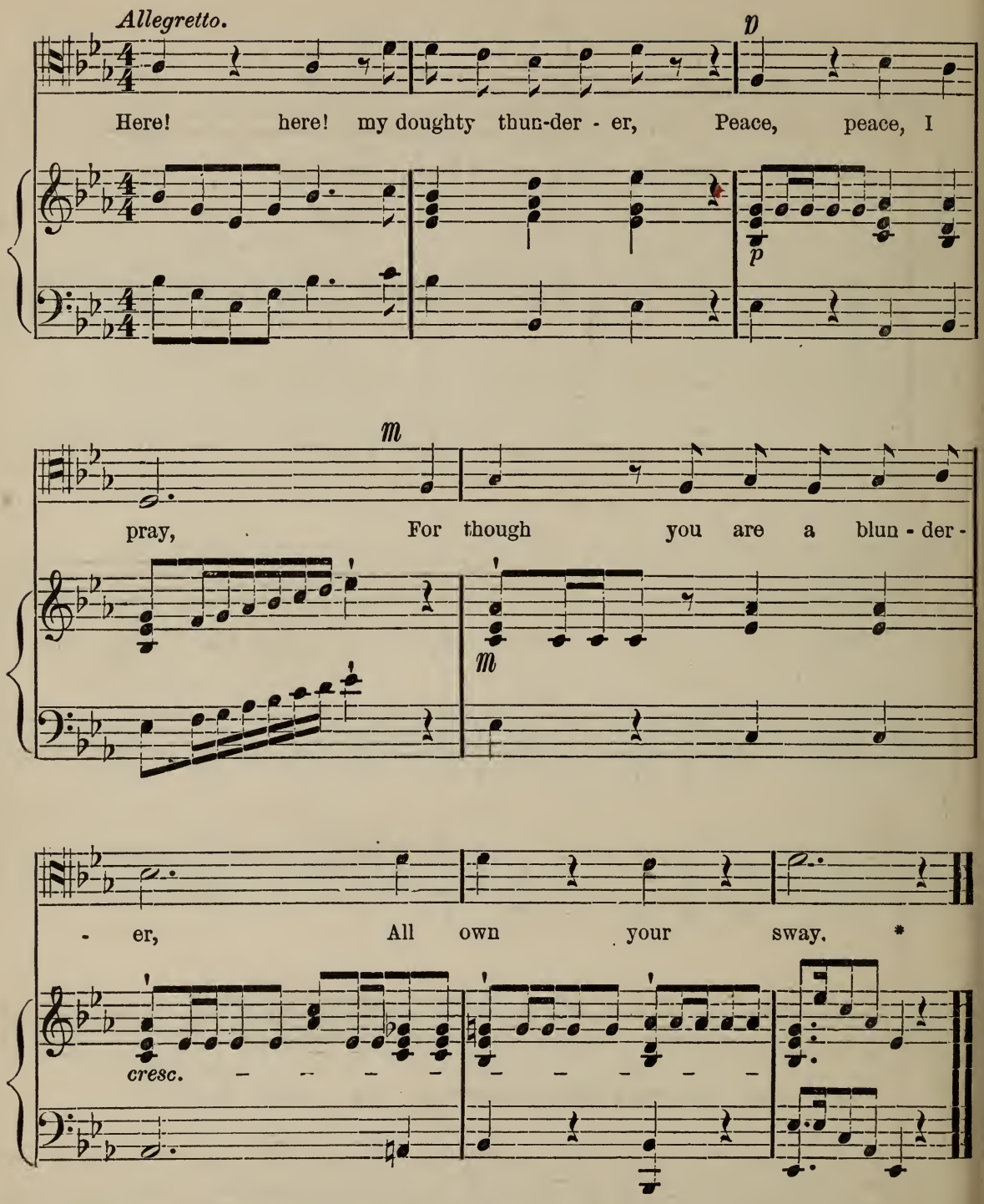

rit.
leap and we dash, in a flur - ry of haste, We freeze and we
rit.
3 3 3 3
a tempo.
melt, And stay not to note what our
a tempo.
march has laid waste, what blows* we have dealt!
rit.
rit.

**Swings his mace and knocks off Santa Claus' hat, who sings the next number jovially.*

Santa Claus. TENOR.



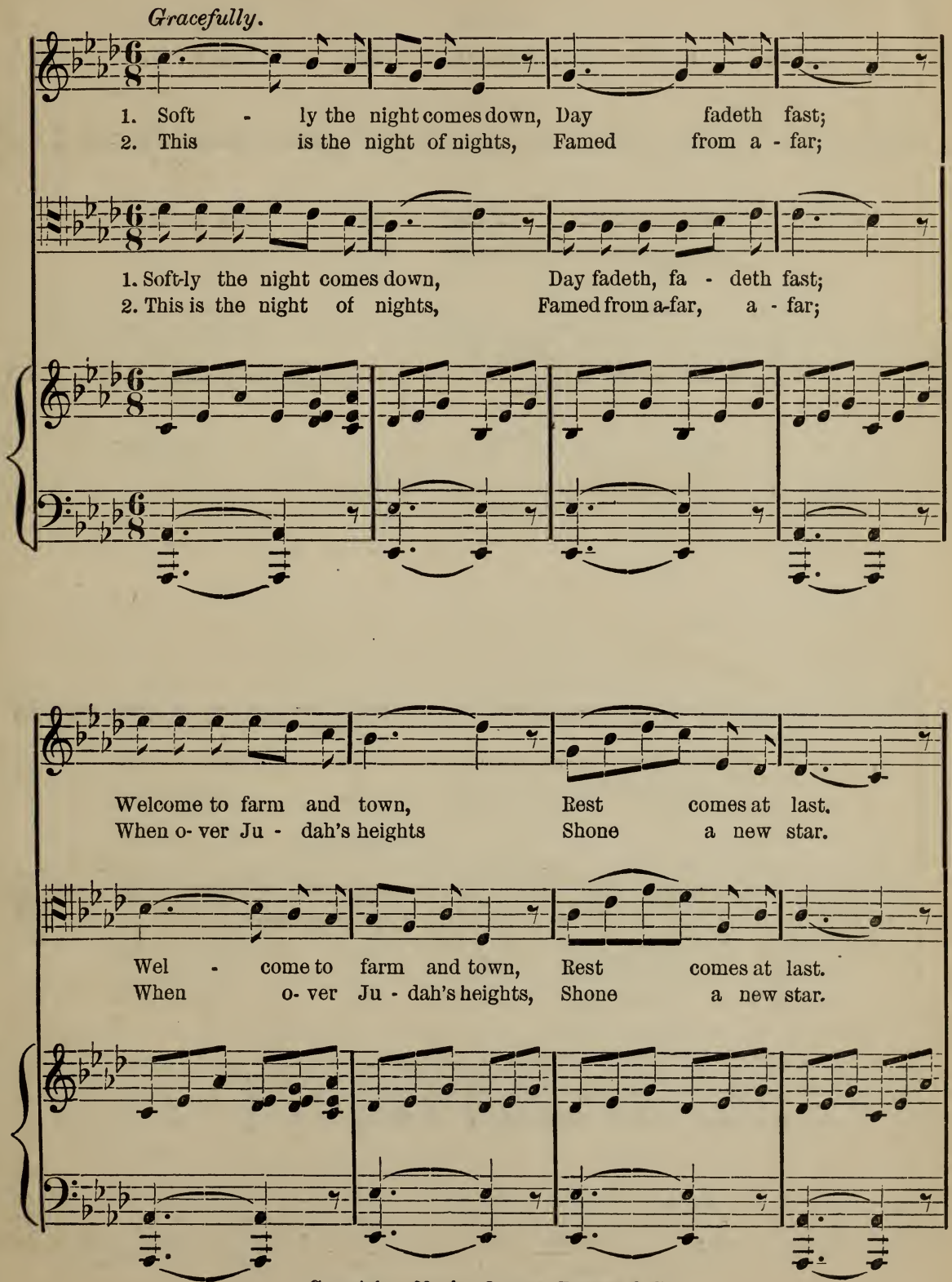
* *Storm Herald bows and retires somewhat shame-facedly.*

SANTA CLAUS, *speaks.* Ho! JACK FROST! come hither. (*J. F. advances and salutes.*) Go now, and order out my sleigh and reindeer. I've a long journey before me. Let the sleigh be fuller of toys than ever before, the children shall not say Santa Claus is losing his energy with added years. And you, my brave Storm-herald, summon your clouds and winds at once, we must have a grand snow-fall for Christmas! But, mind you, let not a trace of yourself be seen on that glad morning,—all must be sunshine then.

(*Jack Frost and Storm Herald salute and exit.*)

SOFTLY THE NIGHT COMES DOWN.

Santa Claus and Winter.


Gracefully.
1. Soft - ly the night comes down, Day fadeth fast;
2. This is the night of nights, Famed from a - far;
1. Soft-ly the night comes down, Day fadeth, fa - deth fast;
2. This is the night of nights, Famed from a-far, a - far;
Welcome to farm and town, Rest comes at last.
When o- ver Ju - dah's heights Shone a new star.
Wel - come to farm and town, Rest comes at last.
When o- ver Ju - dah's heights, Shone a new star.

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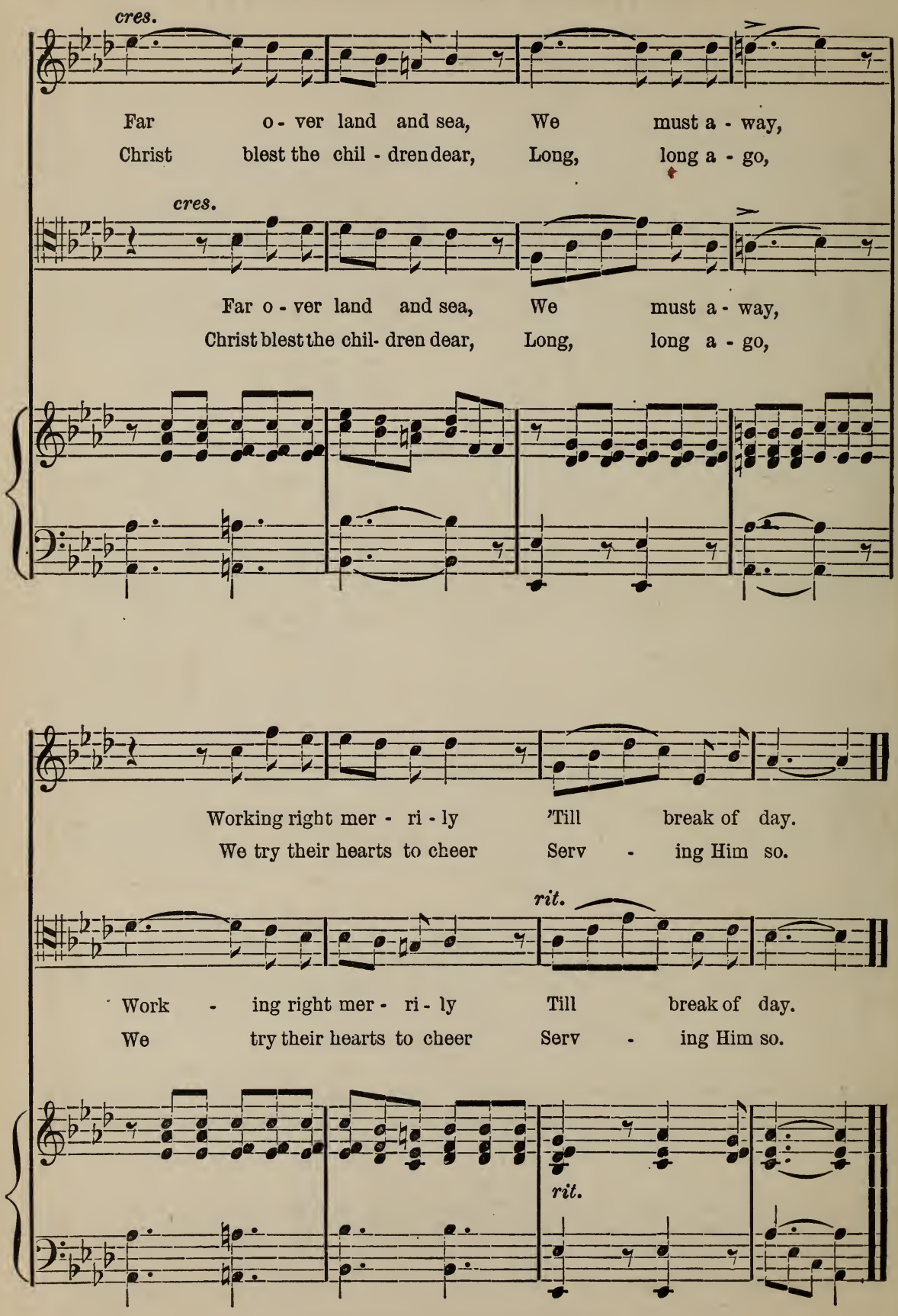
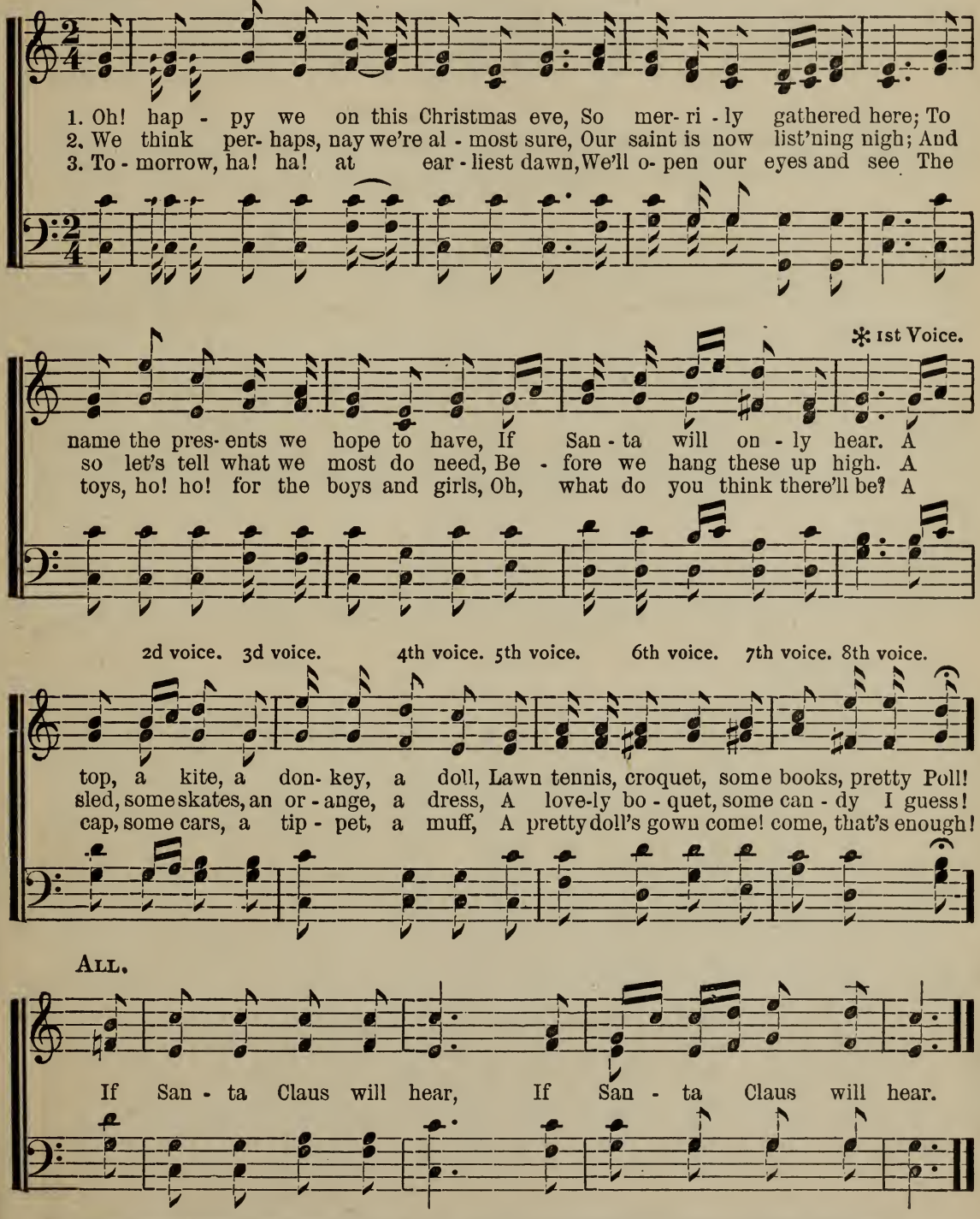

cres.
Far o - ver land and sea, We must a - way,
Christ blest the chil - dren dear, Long, long a - go,
cres.
Far o - ver land and sea, We must a - way,
Christ blest the chil- dren dear, Long, long a - go,
Working right mer - ri - ly 'Till break of day.
We try their hearts to cheer Serv - ing Him so.
rit.
Work - ing right mer - ri - ly Till break of day.
We try their hearts to cheer Serv - ing Him so.
rit.

O HAPPY WE ON THIS CHRISTMAS EVE.

ACT I. SCENE II. (*A farm kitchen with fire-place and screen in the rear. Curtains, or cloth stretched on either hand, to which stockings can be strongly fastened. A few seats to right and left of stage; leaving centre free.*)

(*Chorus of children, each one carrying a long gay stocking, march in and circle about the stage—then take position and sing.*)

Chorus.


1. Oh! hap - py we on this Christmas eve, So mer- ri - ly gathered here; To
2. We think per- haps, nay we're al - most sure, Our saint is now list'ning nigh; And
3. To - morrow, ha! ha! at ear - liest dawn, We'll o- pen our eyes and see The
* 1st Voice.
name the pres- ents we hope to have, If San - ta will on - ly hear. A
so let's tell what we most do need, Be - fore we hang these up high. A
toys, ho! ho! for the boys and girls, Oh, what do you think there'll be? A
2d voice. 3d voice. 4th voice. 5th voice. 6th voice. 7th voice. 8th voice.
top, a kite, a don- key, a doll, Lawn tennis, croquet, some books, pretty Poll!
sled, some skates, an or - ange, a dress, A love-ly bo - quet, some can - dy I guess!
cap, some cars, a tip - pet, a muff, A pretty doll's gown come! come, that's enough!
ALL.
If San - ta Claus will hear, If San - ta Claus will hear.

* *Select good voices to represent each toy, and but one sing at a time, singing the air*

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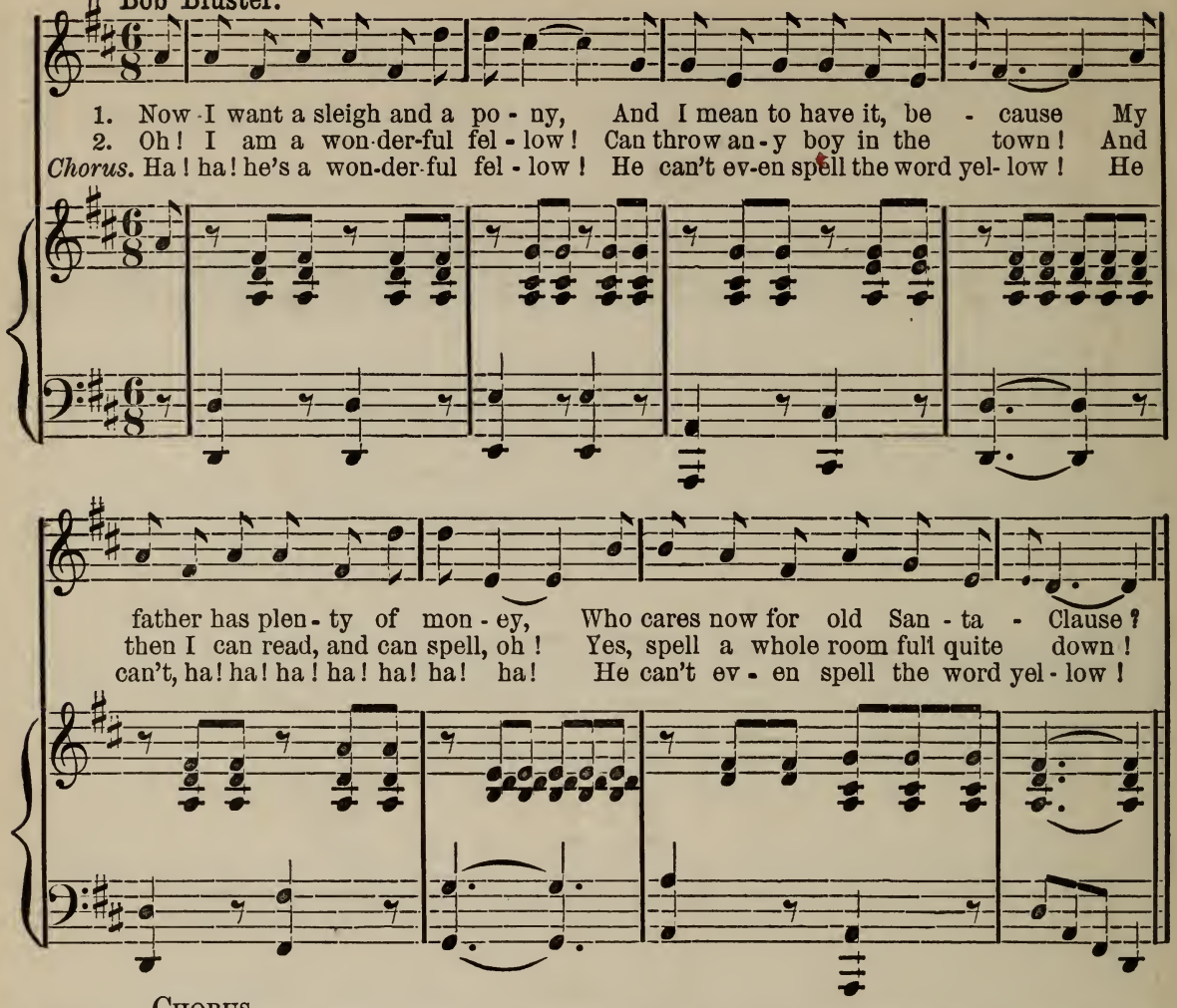
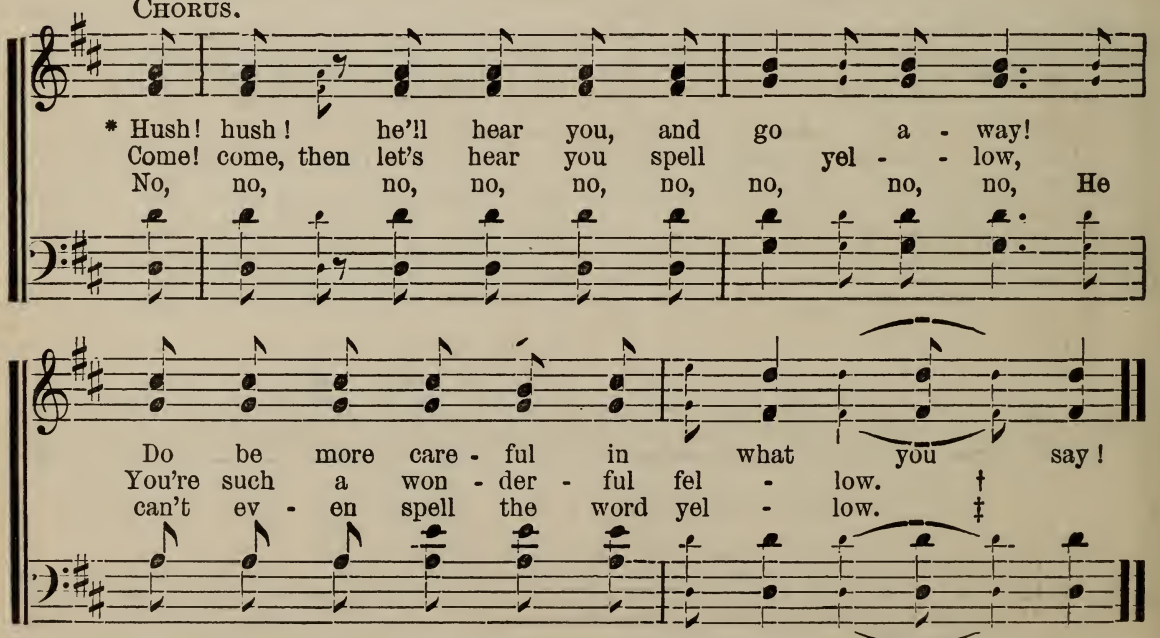
NOW I WANT A SLEIGH AND A PONY.

Bob Bluster.


1. Now I want a sleigh and a po - ny, And I mean to have it, be - cause My
2. Oh! I am a won-der-ful fel - low! Can throw an - y boy in the town! And
Chorus. Ha! ha! he's a won-der-ful fel - low! He can't ev-en spell the word yel- low! He
father has plen - ty of mon - ey, Who cares now for old San - ta - Clause?
then I can read, and can spell, oh! Yes, spell a whole room full quite down!
can't, ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! He can't ev - en spell the word yel - low!

CHORUS.

* Hush! hush! he'll hear you, and go a - way!
Come! come, then let's hear you spell yel - - low,
No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, He
Do be more care - ful in what you say!
You're such a won - der - ful fel - low. †
can't ev - en spell the word yel - low. ‡

* Looking anxiously about. † Bob begins hesitatingly and spells. Y—e—l—l—o! Yello.—Chorus sing ha, ha.
‡ He blushes—looks confused, ruffles up his hair, and tries again. Y—e—l—o—w, Yelow.—The Chorus then sing ha, ha, etc.

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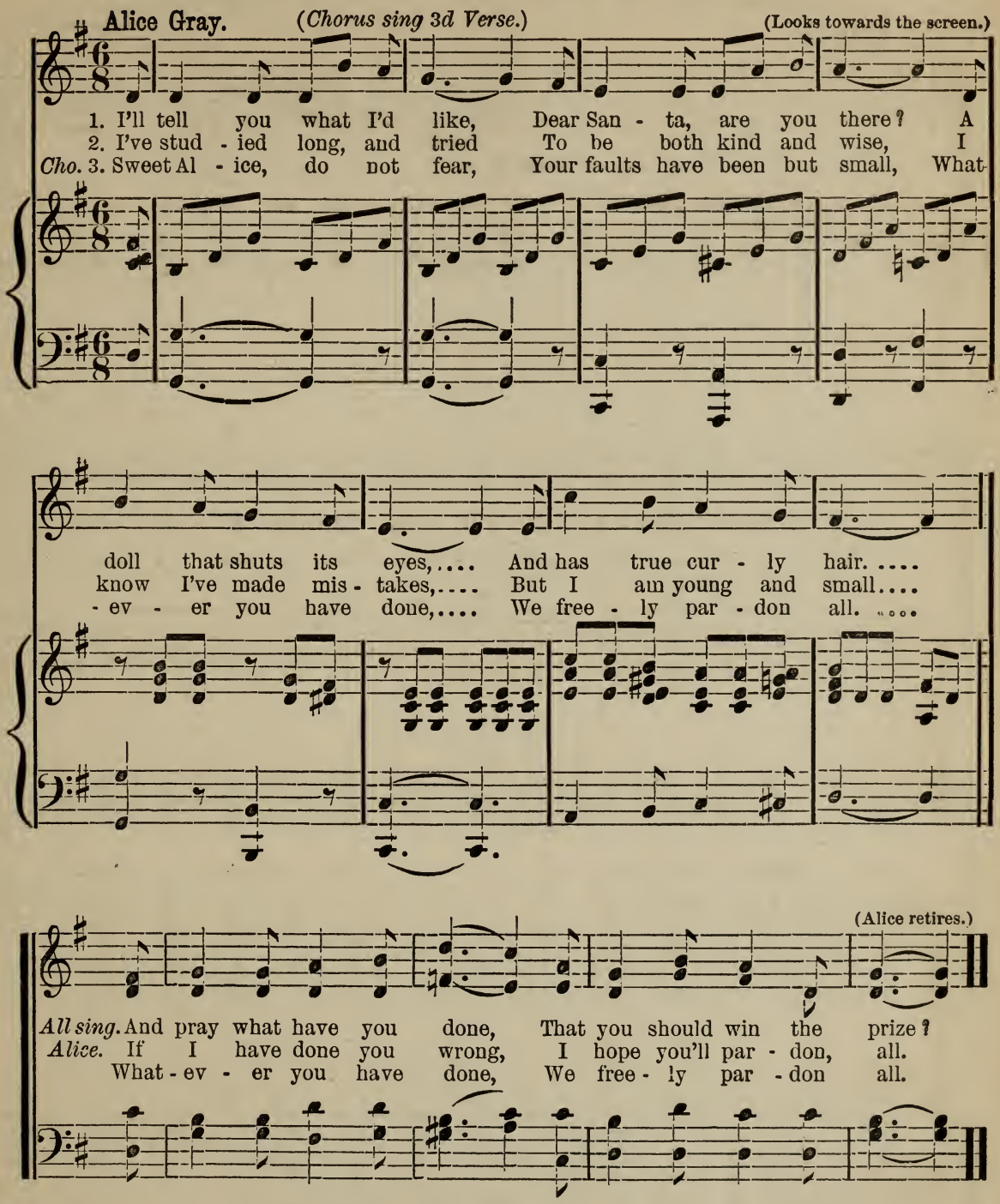
Alice Gray.
(Chorus sing 3d Verse.)
(Looks towards the screen.)
1. I'll tell you what I'd like, Dear San - ta, are you there? A
2. I've stud - ied long, and tried To be both kind and wise, I
Cho. 3. Sweet Al - ice, do not fear, Your faults have been but small, What
doll that shuts its eyes,.... And has true cur - ly hair. ....
know I've made mis - takes,.... But I am young and small....
- ev - er you have done,.... We free - ly par - don all. ....
(Alice retires.)
All sing. And pray what have you done, That you should win the prize?
Alice. If I have done you wrong, I hope you'll par - don, all.
What - ev - er you have done, We free - ly par - don all.

(SANTA CLAUS *here pops his head out from behind the screen, and nods approvingly.* BLANCHE *and* LOUISE *advance, and speak.*)

BLANCHE. How kind of Grandpa to invite us all to the farm for Christmas! I'm sure Santa Claus will like to come here, it's such a dear old place. What do you want most, Louise?

LOUISE. I hardly know, Blanche. There's one thing I always like to get, and that is a book—don't you?

BLANCHE. I'm afraid I like toys better, but I feel almost ashamed to ask for anything when I think of those poor children we saw yesterday!

LOUISE. Poor things! How cold and pinched they looked! Only think, no father, and no mother, and *such* a home! Couldn't we do something to make them happy to-morrow? Surely, Christmas is the time to help the poor!

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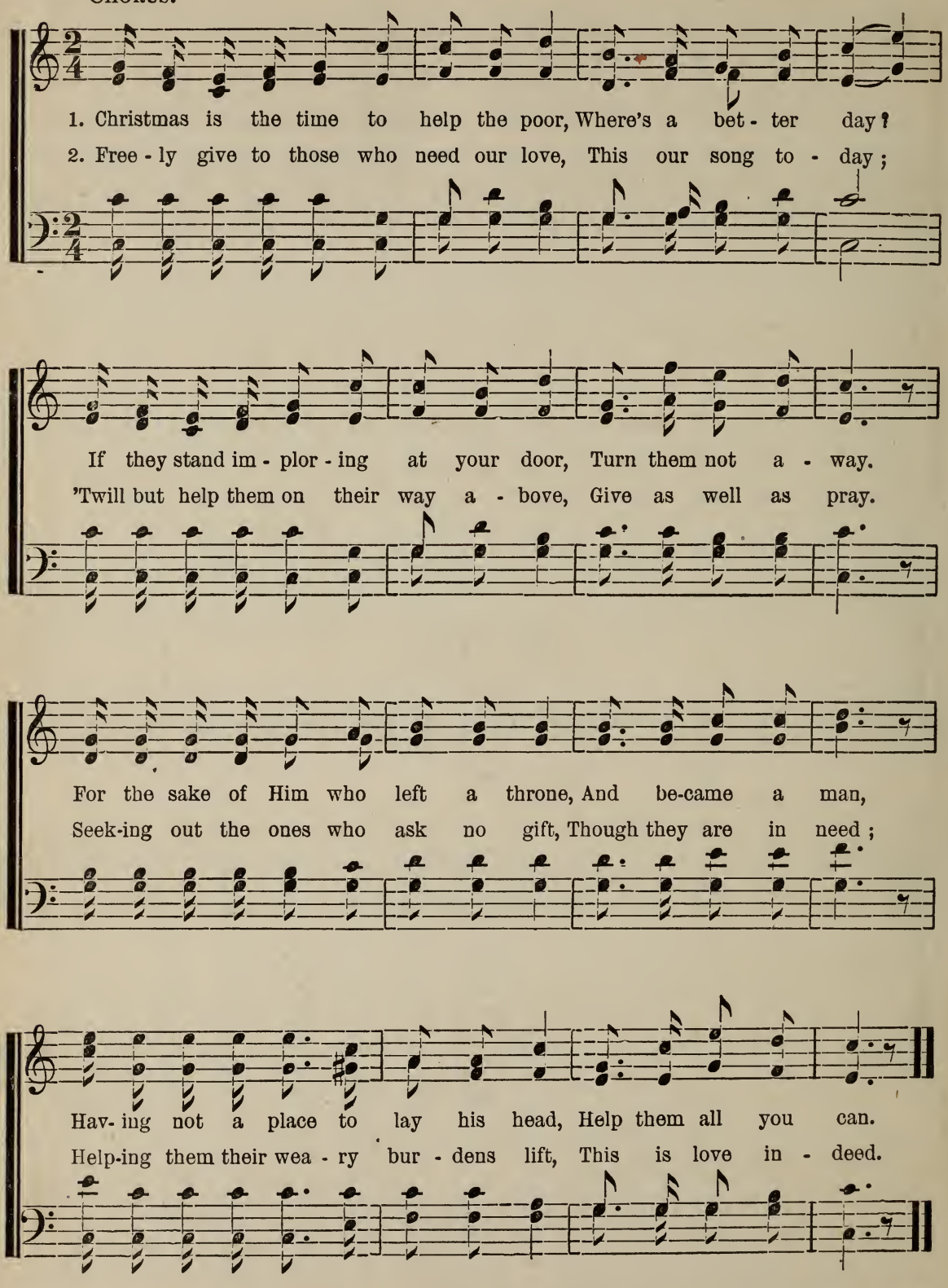
CHRISTMAS IS THE TIME TO HELP THE POOR.

CHORUS.

1. Christmas is the time to help the poor, Where's a bet - ter day?
2. Free - ly give to those who need our love, This our song to - day;
If they stand im - plor - ing at your door, Turn them not a - way.
'Twill but help them on their way a - bove, Give as well as pray.
For the sake of Him who left a throne, And be-came a man,
Seek-ing out the ones who ask no gift, Though they are in need;
Hav- ing not a place to lay his head, Help them all you can.
Help-ing them their wea - ry bur - dens lift, This is love in - deed.

BLANCHE, (*Pointing to right.*) Oh, see! Some one is coming. (SALLY SLOVEN *enters from the right, carrying a very ragged stocking.*)

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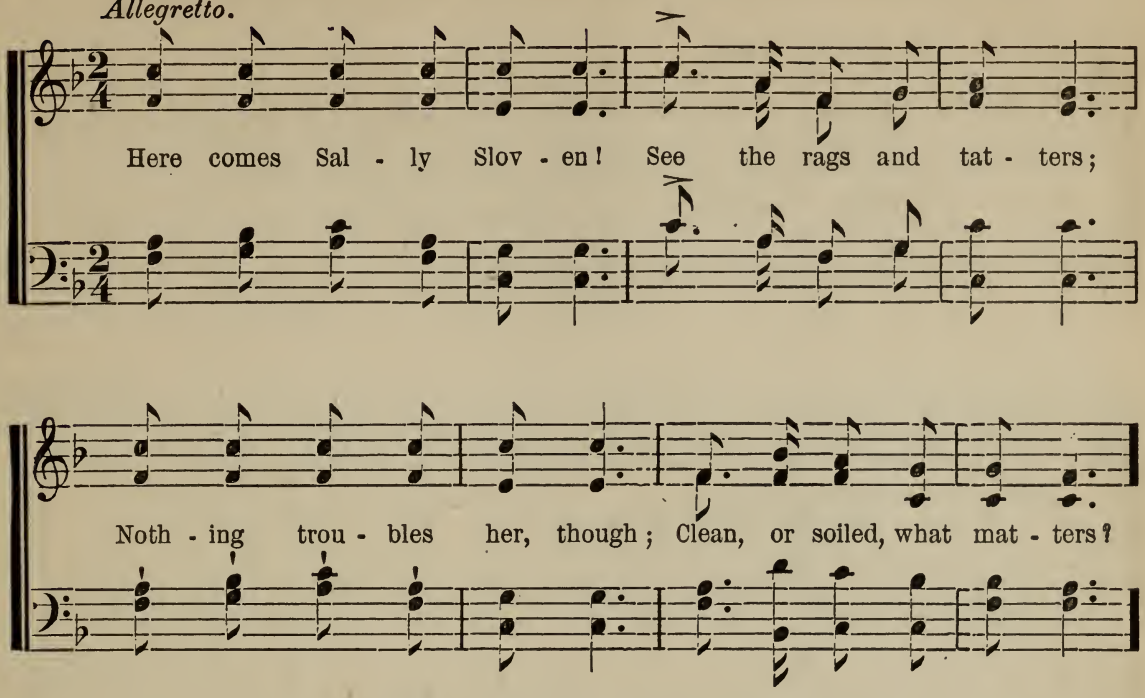
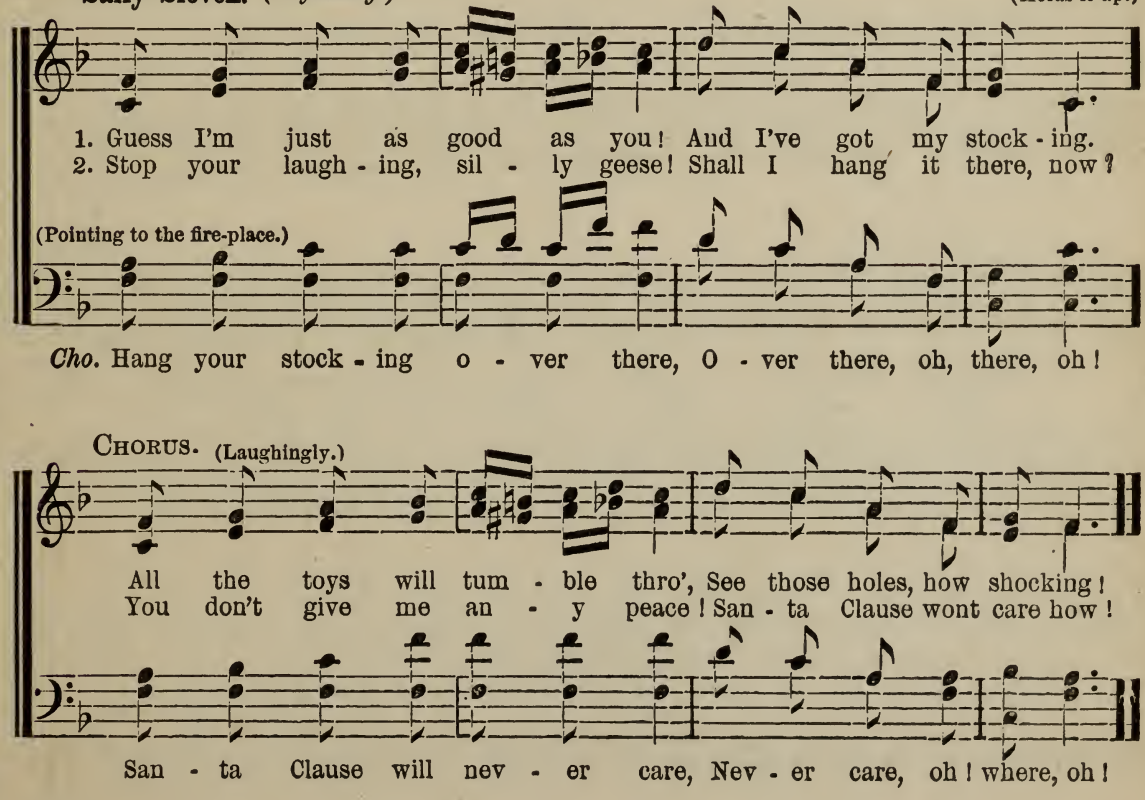
HERE COMES SALLY SLOVEN.

CHORUS.

Allegretto.



Sally Sloven. (*Defiantly.*) (Holds it up.)


1. Guess I'm just as good as you! And I've got my stock - ing.
2. Stop your laugh - ing, sil - ly geese! Shall I hang it there, now?
(Pointing to the fire-place.)
Cho. Hang your stock - ing o - ver there, O - ver there, oh, there, oh!

CHORUS. (Laughingly.)

All the toys will tum - ble thro', See those holes, how shocking!
You don't give me an - y peace! San - ta Clause wont care how!
San - ta Clause will nev - er care, Nev - er care, oh! where, oh!

(SALLY *goes and pins up her stocking upside down, while members of the chorus continue to giggle, point, and whisper among themselves*)

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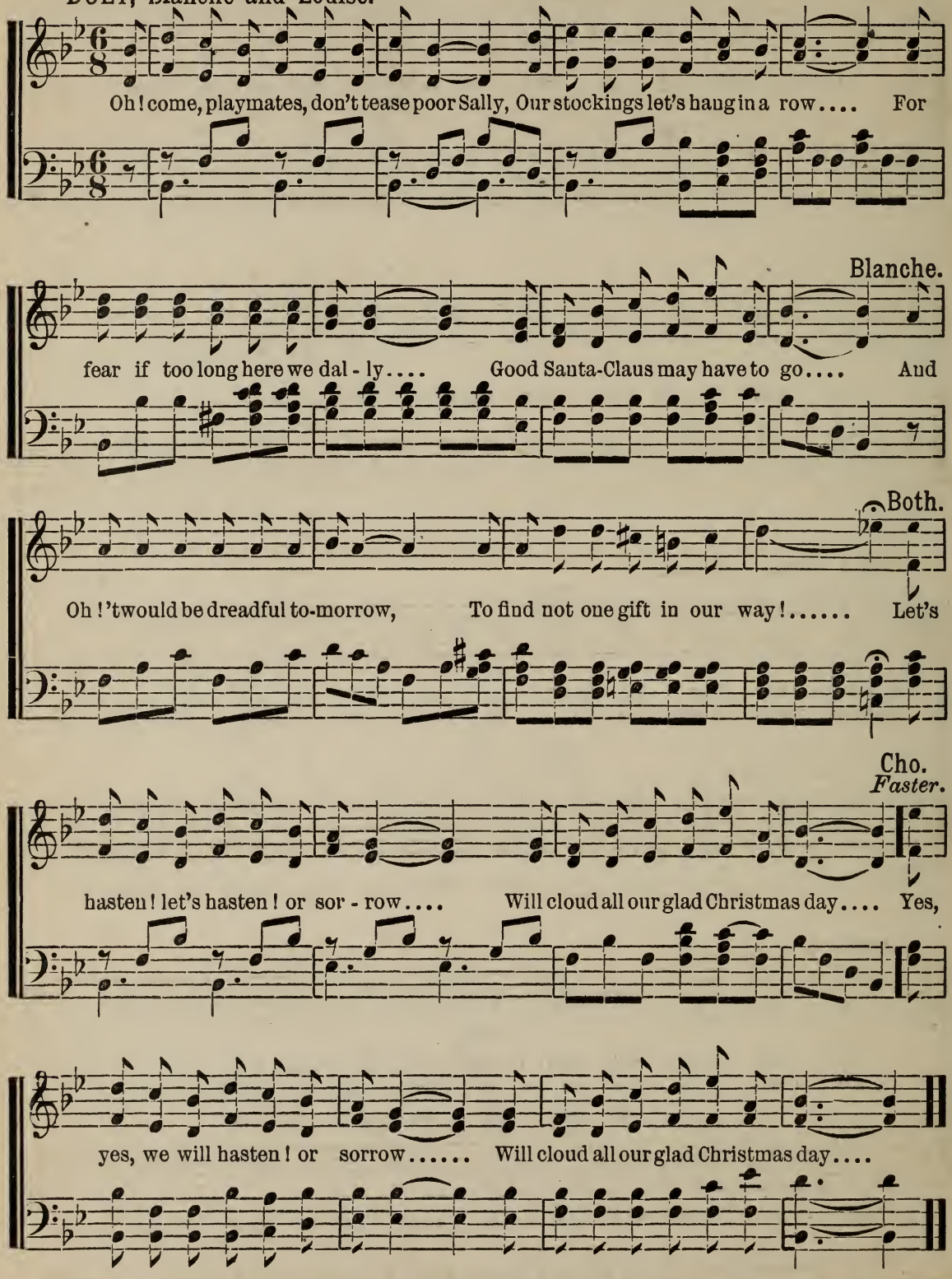
OH! COME PLAY-MATES, DON'T TEASE POOR SALLY.

DUET, Blanche and Louise.

Oh! come, playmates, don't tease poor Sally, Our stockings let's hang in a row.... For
Blanche.
fear if too long here we dal - ly.... Good Santa-Claus may have to go.... And
Both.
Oh! 'twould be dreadful to-morrow, To find not one gift in our way!..... Let's
Cho.
Faster.
hasten! let's hasten! or sor - row.... Will cloud all our glad Christmas day.... Yes,
yes, we will hasten! or sorrow..... Will cloud all our glad Christmas day....

(Chorus members then resume places and sing the "Good-night Song," marching slowly off during last verse, and letting music die away as if in the distance.)

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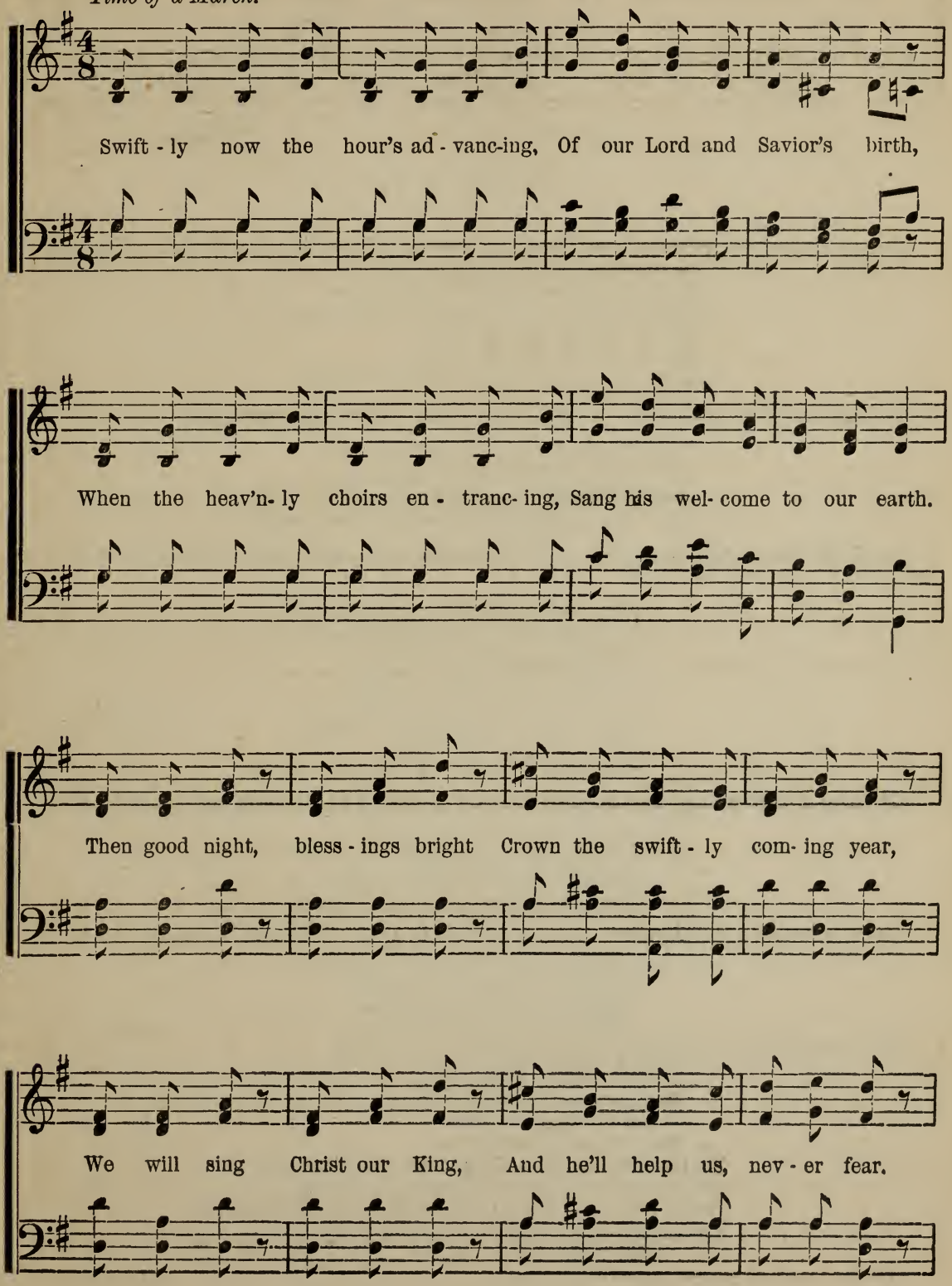
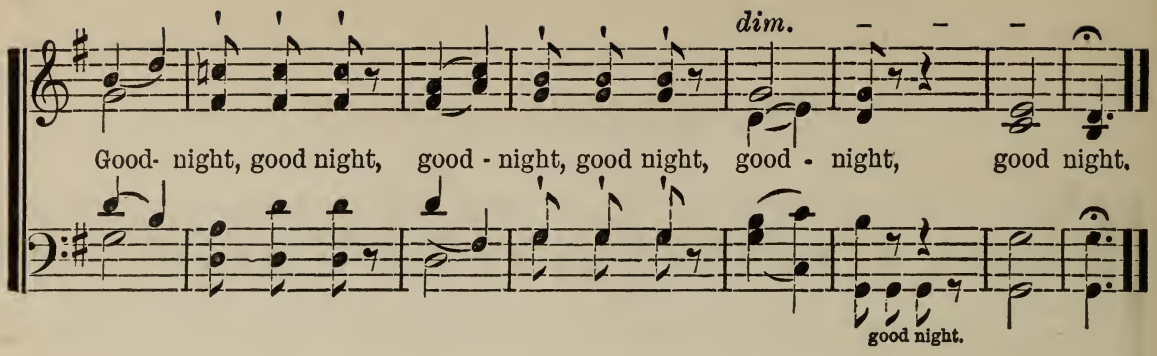
SWIFTLY NOW THE HOURS ADVANCING.

CHORUS. *(Marching one step to two notes.)*

Time of a March.


Swift - ly now the hour's ad - vanc-ing, Of our Lord and Savior's birth,
When the heav'n- ly choirs en - tranc- ing, Sang his wel- come to our earth.
Then good night, bless - ings bright Crown the swift - ly com- ing year,
We will sing Christ our King, And he'll help us, nev - er fear.



ACT 11.

SCENE I.

(SANTA CLAUS, *first peering from behind the screen, enters with a bag of toys.* ***Recites.***)

Dear me! at last the coast is clear!
Half of the night they've kept me here,
Quite forgetting—or else they didn't know
Wise old sayings of long ago!
"Early to bed, and early to rise,
Makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise!"

(*Proceeds to fill the stockings.* ***As he puts a doll in Alice Gray's he says:***)

There! little maid, you have your dolly,
All ruffled up in the height of folly,
You've won the prize with your gentle ways,
May Heaven's peace crown your coming days!

(*At Sally Sloven's stocking pauses, takes it between finger and thumb and examines it critically, with a shake of the head.*)

Well, well, well, what have we here?
Which is top, and which is toe?
I confess its not quite clear,
Can't put toys in this, I know!
Let me see—a slattern, sure,
Owns this old, unmended stocking;
Such a sight I can't endure,
It is really quite too shocking!

(*Replaces it with a long, neat stocking in which he puts a brush, comb, and hand-mirror.*)

I'll put this one in its place,
As a hint to nicer ways;
Neat attire and well kept curls,
Give new charms to sweetest girls.

(*When he reaches Bob Bluster's stocking he puts in a bundle of switches, and says:*)

Here's a boy needs taking down,
Biggest braggert in the town,
Vulgar airs and empty pate,
Make a character I hate!

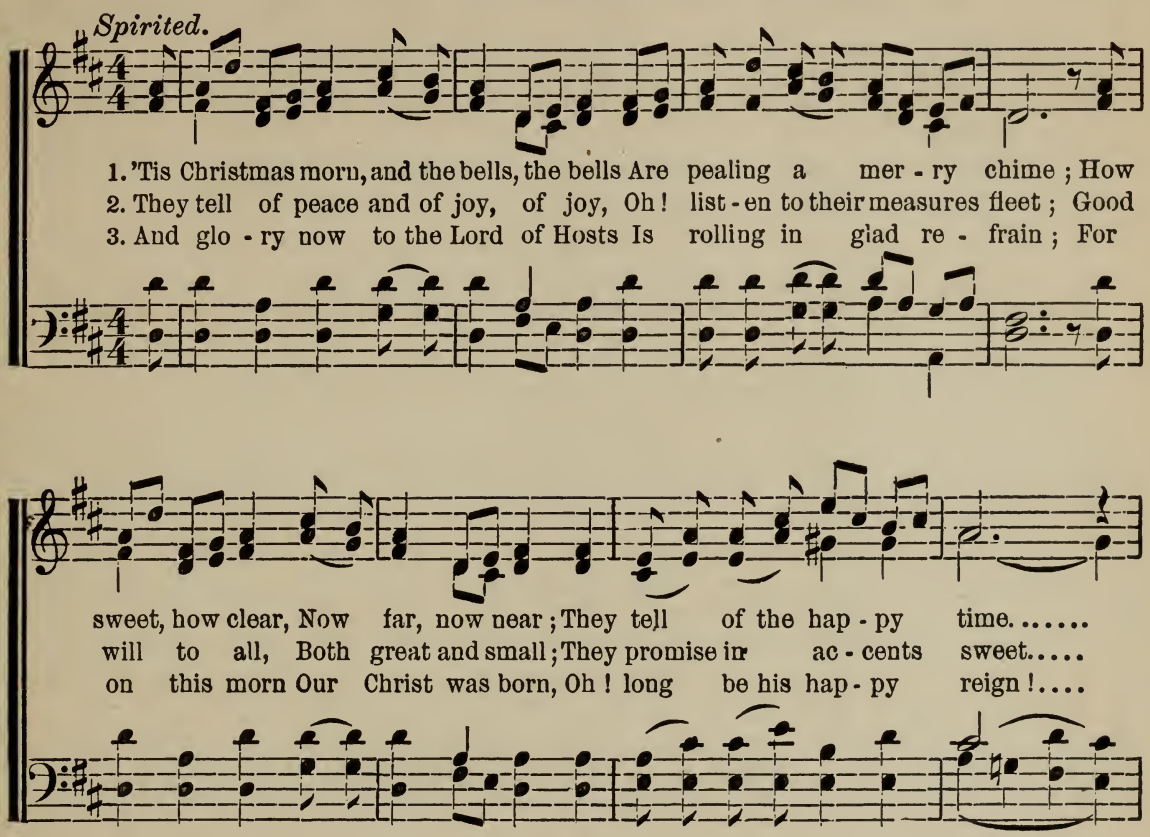
(*After filling all the stockings comes forward and speaks;*)

Good night! Good night!
Now my pleasant task is done,
And I'll hie to my cave
Where I never see the sun,
But the love of my children, their laughter and glee,
Are better than sunshine of summer to me;
They'll follow me homeward, and fill with good cheer
The busiest days of the forthcoming year!
Good night! Good night!

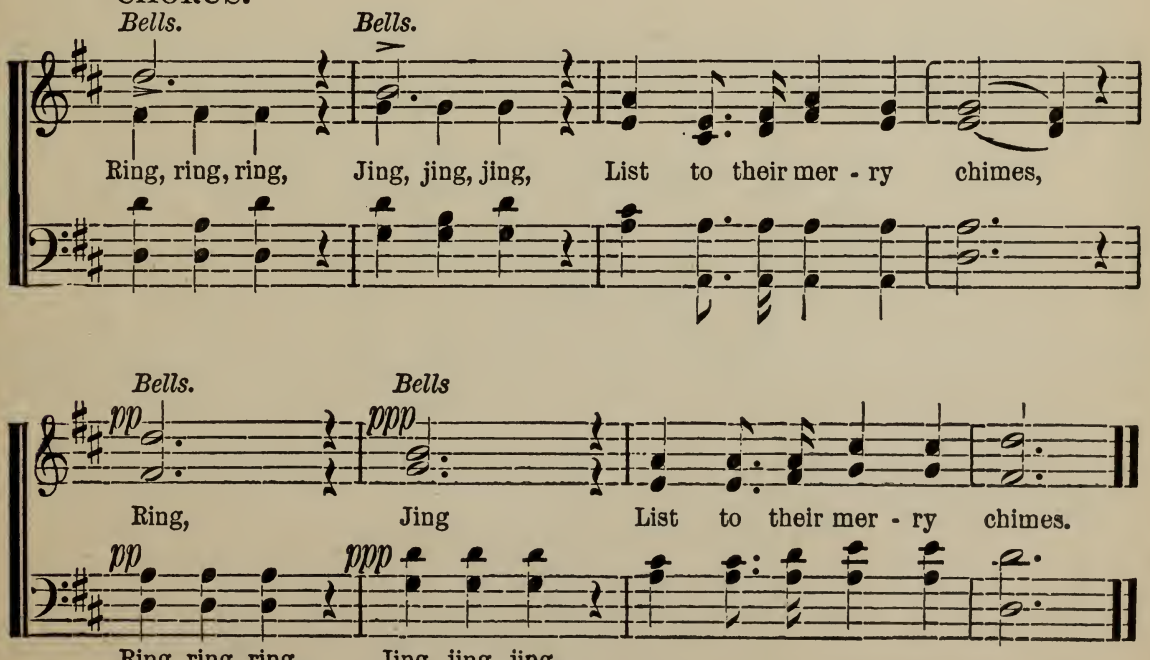
(*Retires towards screen, waving his hand.*) ***CURTAIN.***

SCENE II.— (*The same. Enter Chorus singing. If possible a bell should accompany this song.*

'TIS CHRISTMAS MORN.


Spirited.
1. 'Tis Christmas morn, and the bells, the bells Are pealing a mer - ry chime ; How
2. They tell of peace and of joy, of joy, Oh ! list - en to their measures fleet ; Good
3. And glo - ry now to the Lord of Hosts Is rolling in glad re - frain ; For
sweet, how clear, Now far, now near ; They tell of the hap - py time.....
will to all, Both great and small ; They promise in ac - cents sweet.....
on this morn Our Christ was born, Oh ! long be his hap - py reign !....

CHORUS.



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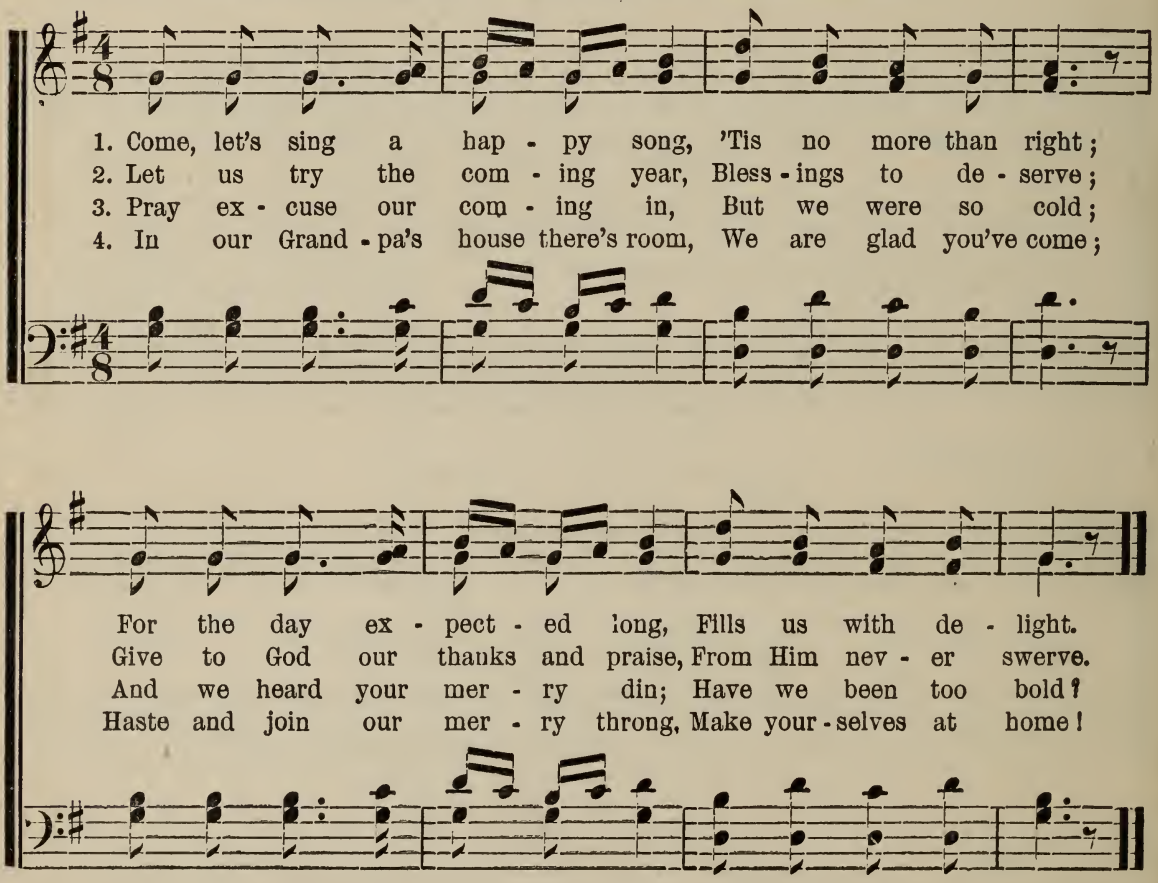
(*Members of Chorus scatter, and begin finding presents in stockings. All have something.* ALICE GRAY *hugs her dolly and walks about with it;* LOUISE *finds a book in her stocking and begins to read.* SALLY SLOVEN *examines the contents of hers critically, seems pleased, and finally hangs up the mirror and begins to comb her hair.* BOB BLUSTER *is intensely angry, throws down switches, and bursts into loud crying, sitting down at right hand.* ALICE GRAY, *after watching him a moment, goes to him, and putting her hand on his shoulder, says :*)

ALICE. Don't cry Bob? It *is* hard I know. I have a quarter in my pocket, wont you take it to buy candy with?

(BOB *shakes her off angrily, and continues to cry noisily, and* ALICE *turns sorrowfully away. Members of Chorus, excepting* BOB, *gradually resume their places, while singing.*)

COME, LET'S SING A HAPPY SONG.

All sing. (KATE *and* WILLIE *enter from left in time to sing third verse.*)


1. Come, let's sing a hap - py song, 'Tis no more than right;
2. Let us try the com - ing year, Bless - ings to de - serve;
3. Pray ex - cuse our com - ing in, But we were so cold;
4. In our Grand - pa's house there's room, We are glad you've come;
For the day ex - pect - ed long, Fills us with de - light.
Give to God our thanks and praise, From Him nev - er swerve.
And we heard your mer - ry din; Have we been too bold?
Haste and join our mer - ry throng, Make your - selves at home!

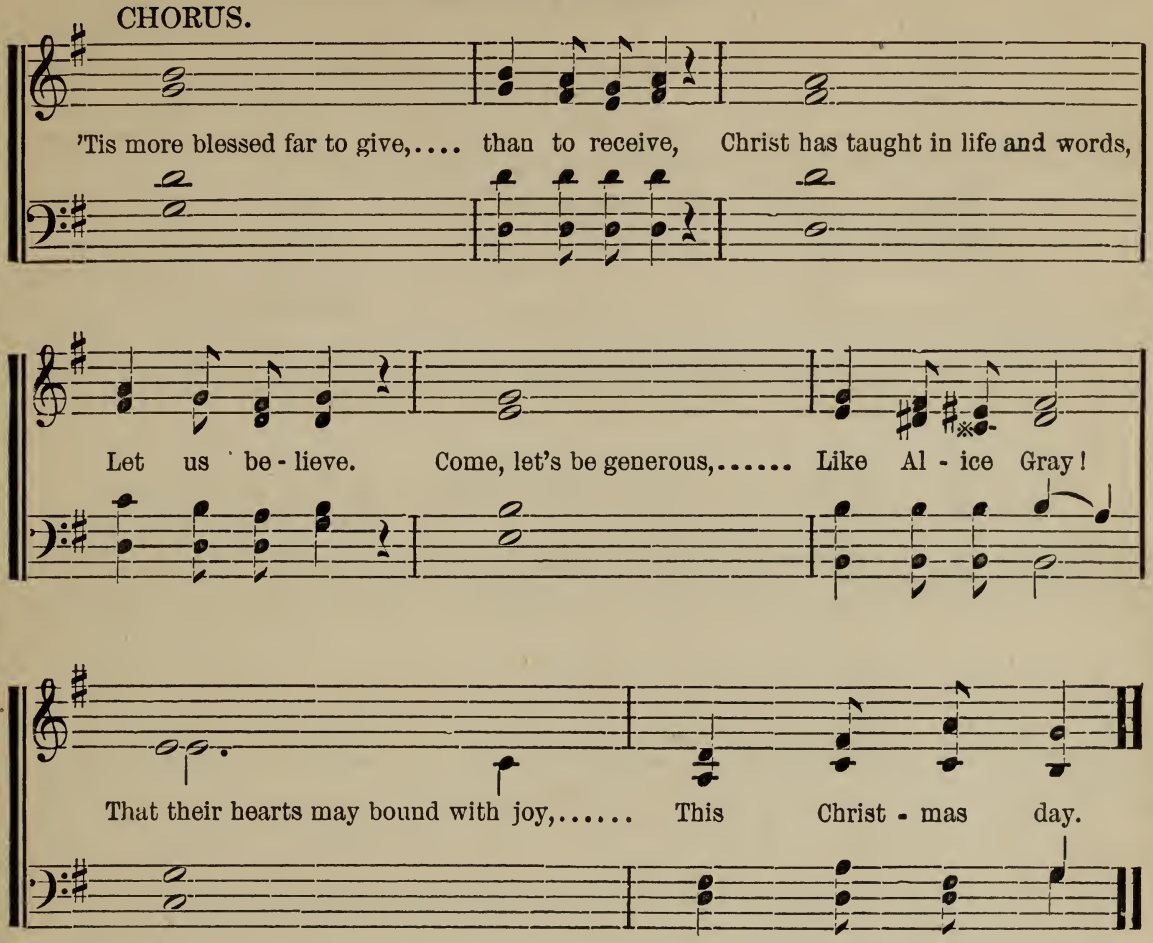
(BLANCHE *and* LOUISE *come forward and lead* KATE *and* WILLIE *to seats on the right, and turning to the Chorus, sing the 5th verse.*)

5 Have we nothiug we can spare,
From our heaped-up toys?
Surely, we should with them share,
'Twill increase our joys.

(ALICE GRAY *comes forward and lays her doll on* KATE'S *lap and returns to her place.*)

'TIS MORE BLESSED FAR TO GIVE.

CHORUS.


'Tis more blessed far to give,.... than to receive, Christ has taught in life and words,
Let us be - lieve. Come, let's be generous,..... Like Al - ice Gray!
That their hearts may bound with joy,..... This Christ - mas day.

(*They form in line and march in front of* KATE *and* WILLIE, *each one dropping a toy in the lap of one or the other as they pass.* SALLY SLOVEN *is evidently at a loss, but finally gives her brush, and marches on, admiring herself in the hand mirror as she goes.*

BOB BLUSTER *at length joins the procession, making the last one, and tosses his bundle of switches into* WILLIE'S *lap, saying:*)

That's what Santa Claus brought me;
He was mean, as mean can be—
But I'm generous you see,
All I have I give!

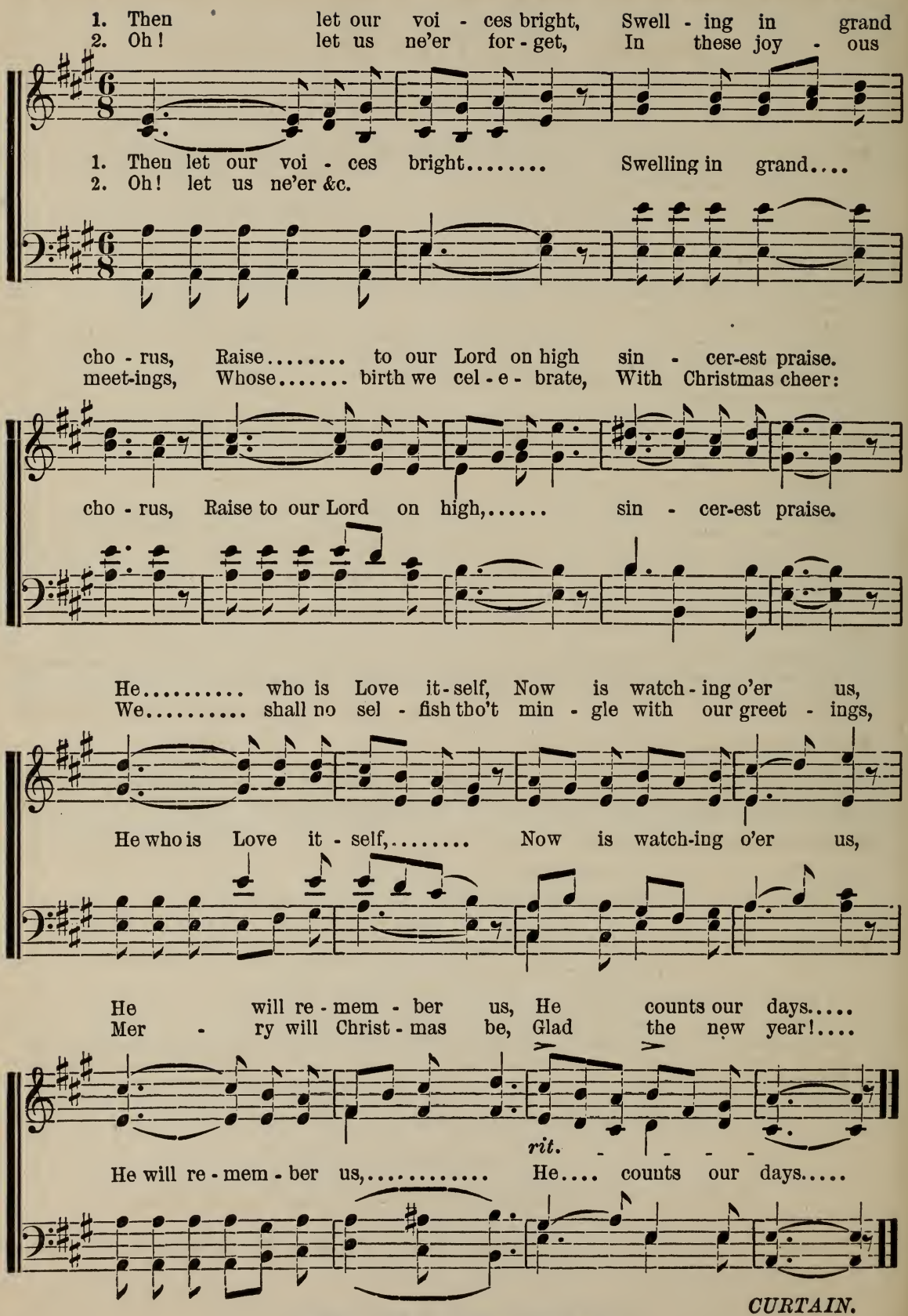
(*Chorus, in place again, laugh and recite.*)

Learn to be as good as bold,
Learn to think less of your gold,
Study hard, then when you're old,
You'll begin to live!

(KATE *and* WILLIE *at first seem overcome, and whisper together, then rising and depositing their gifts on the chairs, come forward a little, and recite:*)

How can we tell you what
Grateful thoughts we cherish?
How can we e'er forget
Your charity?
Now does our misery
In your presence perish.
Gladly we join in praise,
This happy day.

(*They take places at the right of Chorus, and all join in Closing Anthem.*)

CLOSING ANTHEM.

1. Then let our voi - ces bright, Swell - ing in grand
2. Oh! let us ne'er for - get, In these joy - ous
1. Then let our voi - ces bright..... Swelling in grand....
2. Oh! let us ne'er &c.
cho - rus, Raise..... to our Lord on high sin - cer-est praise.
meet-ings, Whose..... birth we cel - e - brate, With Christmas cheer:
cho - rus, Raise to our Lord on high,..... sin - cer-est praise.
He..... who is Love it-self, Now is watch - ing o'er us,
We..... shall no sel - fish tho't min - gle with our greet - ings,
He who is Love it - self,..... Now is watch-ing o'er us,
He will re - mem - ber us, He counts our days.....
Mer - ry will Christ - mas be, Glad the new year!....
rit.
He will re - mem - ber us,..... He.... counts our days.....
CURTAIN.

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